



"Bob Roat, P.E."

09/05/2006 10:15 AM

MST

Please respond to broat

To: yose_planning@nps.gov

cc:

Subject: Public Comment on Tuolumne River Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Plan

September 5, 2006

Public Comment Form

Tuolumne River Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Plan

Bob Roat, Brighton Environmental

Oakland, CA 94602

RECEIVED

TWSR-178-EIS

SEP 05 2006

P. 102

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

After visiting Tuolumne Meadows this August with my family, I have the following comments for the Tuolumne River Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Plan

1. Reduce/eliminate horse packing to the High Sierra Camps (HSC). Replace with people packing in supplies for the HSC, like the Appalachian Mountain club does in the White Mountains in New Hampshire. Horses have a huge negative impact on the trails and the surrounding flora and fauna and their use should be reduced. There are probably thousands of high school and college student who would do the packing for next to nothing just for the chance to be in the park.
2. Remove most of 'A' loop at the campground. It is way too close to the rivers.
3. More shuttle service. Get rid of the road side parking at Cathedral Lakes trailhead and consolidate backpack parking at one of the stable areas (which won't be needed due to no horse packing in HSC). Shuttles should run every 15 minutes during the day, with a sweeper shuttle into the evening every hour. Any thing less and you will lose the motivation of the users to get out of their cars.
4. Replace diesel shuttles with diesel/electric hybrids or electric shuttles to reduce pollution. Replacement shuttles should be set up for backpacks. Fit with interior luggage racks large enough for backpacks take out front seats or put external racks. Shuttles should run throughout Yosemite for free.
5. Get rid of the gas station. It is a time bomb and will eventually pollute the watershed no matter how careful they are.
6. Replace campground and other toilets with low flow toilets to reduce water used and reduce waste treatment requirements. Install a 'grey water' system to use untreated water in the toilets to reduce the volume of drinking water treatment needed.
7. Replace the old sewage treatment system (oxidation pond) with a high tech system to produce clean water at the effluent for discharge back into the Tuolumne River.
8. I understand that brook trout are non-native to the watershed above Hetch-Hetchy. If so, put together a plan to remove them (no-limit fishing, gill netting, etc.) like Sequoia/Kings Canyon.
9. The back country HSCs need to be pulled back under the control of the National Park Service. Private business should not be operating in the back country; profit motive and protection of natural resources are in conflict. The impact of the camps should be studied

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- and mitigated with the highest priority given to protection of the natural resources.
10. Make NPS Visitor Center more prominent and the concessionaries less prominent physically in the meadows. Right now, the most visible human presence in the meadows is the store/gas station. This seems contrary to the mission of the park.
 11. Many of the ski resorts in the Tahoe area have installed storm water collection and treatment system for parking areas. State of the art stormwater management should be considered for the Meadows, including oil/water separators, and/or regular street cleaning of parking lots to remove dripped oil.

Thanks for the opportunity to participate.

Robert E. Roat, P.E.
Principal
Brighton Environmental Consulting
[REDACTED]

9/5/06

I am a volunteer in the park , and have been coming to Tuolumne meadows fr about 26 years . I am currently leading a program called Sketching Along the River as part of the Interp. Dept. Prmgs. I take visitors along the Tuolumne River for about 5 hours and we sketch and talk about the river and environs. I have these general comments.

1. The campground and visitors have little effect on the area , even on the river trails.
2. The air quality in the camp ground is unpleasant and some control of the time for campfires and type of fuel burned would be a good idea.
3. The campground roads should be made dust free and have many dips to control speed and regulate runoff.
4. The river side campsites should be retained.
5. The trees growing in the meadow should be allowed to grow.
6. Camp sites should be by site specific reservation only with 50% walk in retained.
7. A large easy to read and understand sign (see the type used by the Forestry Campgrounds) at the campground entrance is needed with a place for 5 minute parking for about 20 vehicles. A campground informational notice should also be at the Visitors Center.
8. The housing and locations of the various parts of the TM system should be left unchanged.
9. The shuttle buses area great idea and need more publicity, also low cost shuttles to and from the Valley would be a great asset.
10. Speed control along the road Hwy120 is needed and more signs and warning may be a partial solution.
11. Any changes in the area should include consideration of the changes in the population both the type of visitors and numbers and also global warming.

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Michelle Straka



09/05/2006 08:37 AM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne River & Meadows

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TWSR-180-EIS

SEP 05 2006

P. 1031

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

We urge the National Park Service to reject any & all plans for developing, any further, the Tuolumne River and Tuolumne Meadows. Any plans that the Park Service may enact should be for eliminating -- rather than adding to -- existing development of Tuolumne Meadows and the Tuolumne River. For the sake of future generations of wildlife and people, we need to keep the Tuolumne River wild & scenic. Any amendment(s) to the Wild & Scenic status of the Tuolumne River should be strengthened, only -- not weakened.

Sincerely,

Michael Lang
Michelle Straka

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"Paul & Karen Amstutz"

[REDACTED]

09/04/2006 04:06 PM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning Comments - Keep it Wild!!!

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TW SR-181-E/S

SEP 05 2006

P. 181

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Keep it Wild... Keep it Simple... Keep it Small... Keep it Natural... Don't spoil the magic of Tuolumne!

After more than 15 years of employment in Yosemite (Curry Company, Yosemite Institute, NPS, El Portal Schools), and 25+ summers of visiting Tuolumne Meadows, I have *finally* had the incredible privilege of *living* in a Tuolumne Tent Cabin for the *entire summer*! My wife is an Interp Ranger, and I am a Park Volunteer. We have 3 young children who have lived with us all summer in our tent cabin, and loved every minute of it! This has definitely been one of the best summers of our lives, and our girls are now begging us to "live in Tuolumne every summer!"

Our experience, both personal and professional, would have been less "wild," less natural, less fulfilling, less enjoyable, and less magical were we living down the hallway in some crowded but modern dorm complex. If we were living in a new condo-type apartment unit, my summer would have been cleaner, more civilized, more insulated, more sealed-up, and more cut-off from the natural world that we came here to both experience and interpret for park visitors.

My family does not require internet access, cable TV, airconditioning, private bathroom facilities and fancy tiled or carpeted floors to live comfortably in Tuolumne and provide excellent service to park visitors. Indeed, the *absence* of some modern conveniences and a simple lifestyle keep us more in touch with the "real world," that being the natural rhythm and cycles of this exceptional wild place. Simple, dispersed, temporary housing fit in well with these goals and in this environment.

"Magic" is a difficult term to define or to quantify, but many experienced employees and visitors who have been returning to Tuolumne Meadows for decades describe this place, and their many summers here, as magical. Employees and visitors do NOT keep returning to Tuolumne for plush accommodations and fancy resort housing. They do not return for contrived entertainment and artificial experiences. They return for simple natural experiences... to climb, to fish, to hike, to view wildlife, to stroll in solitude by the river just a few steps away from the unobtrusive tent cabins nestled in the forest.

In my opinion, modern condo-like facilities, such as those just built at Curry Village, would degrade rather than enhance the Tuolumne experience for both employees and visitors. Consolidating services and facilities into fewer, but far larger developed areas, would change Tuolumne Meadows in a negative way. Most long-time return visitors and employees are *NOT* clamoring for change in Tuolumne! Rather, the countless Tuolumne-philes that I've spoken with this summer would like to "*keep it the same... don't change anything!*" People love this place, and they do not want a grandiose plan to "improve" Tuolumne Meadows.

Obviously, some upgrades and regular maintenance of existing facilities are necessary. If the current waste treatment facilities are unable to handle the volume and are at risk of contaminating the ecosystem, they should of course be upgraded. No employees should have holes in their floors, inoperable pellet stoves, profusely peeling paint, or unsafe stairs and railings. The solution, however, is to better maintain what we have, while keeping the simple magic of Tuolumne intact.

Tuolumne Meadows is today an exquisite and incredible place, with adequate facilities for both employees and visitors. While there is certainly a need to fine tune a few things, PLEASE don't get caught up in the desire to "overhaul" something that isn't broken!

Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments and opinions,

Paul Amstutz - [REDACTED] El Portal, CA 95318

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"Paul & Karen Amstutz"

09/04/2006 03:39 PM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Plan Comments - tent cabins or hardsides?

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TWSR-182-815

SEP 05 2006

P. 1 of 1

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

At a recent all-employee meeting behind the Tuolumne Ranger Station, it was obvious that there is a large gap in the housing desires of certain NPS divisions in Tuolumne Meadows

I am a 15+ year Yosemite resident/employee, and a current NPS volunteer for Interp. My wife is an Interp Ranger. We absolutely LOVE living in the Tent Cabins, regardless of the minor inconveniences. We are successfully raising our 3 young children in Yosemite, and they joyfully lived with us all summer in our wonderful Tent Cabin. We feel that these are more than adequate and appropriate housing facilities for the temporary seasonal nature of employment in Tuolumne Meadows. I would NOT want to live in a more modern dorm facility or condo-complex, and feel it would detract from my own Tuolumne experience, and therefore, the experience and service that I could provide to visitors

On the other hand, several Law Enforcement personnel have indicated that they desire more modern housing facilities. They often work earlier and later in the season, enduring colder weather conditions. They also can be involved in more stressful work situations, search-and-rescue operations, and are required to contact and deal with the more "challenging" park visitors. If tent cabins do not provide adequate housing for the needs of law enforcement personnel, then those needs should certainly be addressed.

I propose a simple solution to the housing "problem" that is only seen as such by a small number of employees:

- Improve and/or replace several law enforcement housing units in their present location to meet the needs of the law enforcement division.
- Keep the simple, dispersed tent cabins as the housing option for most other divisions
- Provide more substantial and regular maintenance of existing structures (both tent and hard cabins) to keep them safe and livable.

The current housing situation in Tuolumne Meadows is NOT broken. Most employees return year after year, despite the simple rustic nature of the housing... *and love their summer experience!* The housing situation could certainly use some minor adjustments, improvements, and fine-tuning, but a major overhaul and massive change is not warranted at this time

Thank you for listening to my comments and ideas,

Paul Amstutz - El Portal, CA

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"Paul & Karen Amstutz"

[REDACTED]

09/04/2006 03:08 PM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>

cc:

Subject: Tuolumne Planning Comments - Housing

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TWSR-183-815

SEP 05 2006

P. 183

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Tuolumne Planning - Scoping Comments - Housing

The key reason that Tuolumne Meadows is such a unique, exquisite and treasured part of Yosemite is because, for a "developed area," it comes the closest to embodying the concept of **Wilderness**. The housing areas, and other minor developments, are small-scale, well-dispersed and nestled into the forest cover. Housing is simple and temporary in nature. There is no large and concentrated "mall complex" as is found in urbanized Yosemite Valley. Human inhabitants are indeed "visitors that do not remain." The Meadows revert to true Wilderness in the winter, and the entire region gets a rest from human impacts for 6-8 months.

To protect the designated Wilderness, and the feeling of *Wildness* in Tuolumne that is so unique and loved, please consider the following:

The majority of Tuolumne employee housing should remain simple & temporary. While set-up and take-town costs are indeed significant, they are outweighed by the benefits of simplicity, site appropriate minimal-impact structures, and the feeling of connection to the natural world that both employees & visitors come here to experience.

- People are only living here for 3 to 4 months. We are indeed just visitors. Temporary tent cabins are a much more appropriate style of simple housing for this area than permanent apartments or several huge dorm complexes. This is not a year-round destination resort... it is a relatively pristine wilderness area

- More frequent maintenance of the current housing structures would certainly be welcome. But converting the simple tent cabins to more complex permanent structures would require a massive initial investment, and far higher long-term maintenance costs. Will the NPS have anywhere near the budget necessary to adequately maintain higher-quality high-cost structures that are only occupied for a few months of the year? The hard-working NPS maintenance crews are already strained to the limit

- Yosemite Valley has year-round employment and year-round visitation. Permanent apartment complexes and condo units may be appropriate there, but NOT in wild and seasonal Tuolumne Meadows

- *Some* permanent winterized structures are, of course, necessary. Some law enforcement personnel, who must work earlier and later in the season, might need their housing upgraded for the colder shoulder seasons.

- More enclosed structures means more rodent issues and hanta-virus concerns. Temporary tent cabin "skeletons" are less inviting to rodents, and are "sterilized" by 8 months of snow, weathering and solar radiation.

- For many personnel, **tent cabins provide an intimate connection to the natural world that surrounds us in Tuolumne**. That is the primary reason that most of us work here. People do not return to Tuolumne year after year after year for the plush housing, lucrative contracts, and comfortable cushy job conditions. **We love what is natural and wild here!** We can easily hear the rain on the roof and the approaching thunderstorms... We can see the shadows of trees in the moonlight on our canvas roof... We can hear the birds song and the buzz of the bees and dragonflies through our thin walls.. While this "connection" is much harder to define or quantify than "annual maintenance costs" or "sewage discharge volumes," it is every bit as important. For certain park employees, such as Interp.Rangers, YA volunteers, Wildlife Management, and Researchers, ***I believe that this natural connection enhances their own***

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experience and improves their ability to both protect and interpret the resource for park visitors.

Housing areas in Tuolumne should remain dispersed. When an impacted trail is present, LNT hikers know to *stay on the trail*. When an area is **not** as impacted, knowledgeable LNT hikers know to *spread out and disperse their impact*.

- Tuolumne housing is currently dispersed, with less impact on the surrounding area. Each individual tent cabin certainly causes impacts, but their small and scattered footprints are surrounded by healthy vegetation, and a few footpaths. Wildlife easily and frequently wander through our housing area, browsing on ample natural food sources. Dispersed tent cabins are much more appropriate and integral part of the natural surroundings than a huge sealed-off consolidated "complex" would be.

- Dispersed small tent cabins and other buildings blend in visually. From the top of most domes and peaks, the visual impact of our current housing areas and developments are minimal. Concentrating structures in a complex or new development would create new unsightly visual impacts from many locations.

Housing units for most, if not all, employees should remain on site in Tuolumne Meadows

- Moving employee housing off-site, such as to Lee Vining, would cause many more problems than it might solve. Employees would be forced into a long and tedious commute on a dangerous winding mountain road choked with tourist vehicles. Increased traffic and congestion at the entrance gate would necessitate an expansion of roadway lanes and kiosks at Tioga Pass. The huge number of employee vehicles commuting into the park would increase air and noise pollution. As it is now, the majority of employees, both NPS and DNC, live close enough to their job site that they can walk, bike or take the shuttle bus to work.

- Many NPS and DNC employees are charged with the responsibility of interpreting the Park's resources, educating the public about natural history, and informing visitors about local conditions. Employees are much more likely to stay in touch with the natural cycles and constant changes in Tuolumne's natural world by living on site.

- There is a vibrant and cohesive community established in Tuolumne's current housing areas. Employees from different divisions and employers interact and mingle as neighbors in this tightknit community of people, all of whom have in common their love for Tuolumne Meadows. Moving housing to a distant dorm complex or apartment units, and creating long commutes for staff, would drastically alter the fabric of these relationships.

- The personal choice is, and has always been, available for individuals to seek their own housing in Lee Vining. I wonder how many Tuolumne employees have found the current Tuolumne housing situation so undesirable that they have actually chosen this option.

Most long-term returning Tuolumne employees and visitors are NOT pushing for major changes and "improvements" to the housing and facilities we currently have. I would guess that a large percentage of planning comments ask the NPS to "keep things the same... don't change anything!" A few minor improvements coupled with better maintenance of existing facilities is warranted. ***A major overhaul and change to current facilities would condemn us all to many years of ugly and noisy heavy destruction and re-construction of a system that is NOT currently broken.***

TW5R-183-815
p. 3 of 3

Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments and opinions,

Paul Amstutz - [REDACTED], El Portal, CA 95318



"Paul & Karen Amstutz"

09/04/2006 04:06 PM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Plan - Motorcycle noise!

RECEIVED
TWSR-184-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 181
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Park Planners,

I am not sure if this comment fits best in the Tuolumne Plan, the MRP, the Yosemite Valley Plan, or just in general Park Policy. Please take my comment into consideration regardless. This is my question... and a few comments:

Why are some incredibly noisy models of motorcycles tolerated in our National Park?

I have lived in El Portal since 1991, close by Highway 140 and the Wild & Scenic Merced River. I lived and worked this summer in Tuolumne Meadows, just 100 yards from Highway 120. I worked outdoors in Yosemite Valley and at Crane Flat for almost 8 years with the Yosemite Institute

In all of these locations, the most consistently disturbing and disruptive noise pollution comes from a certain brand of motorcycle roaring by, usually in large groups out for a scenic ride

In my home I can barely hear any passing vehicles, even the large delivery trucks that constantly pass by... But some types of motorcycles rattle my windows

Hiking the rim of Yosemite Valley, you can barely hear any human sounds below.. except the occasional siren and the roar of motorcycle groups filling the valley with their rumble

I have nothing against motorcycles, or their riders. Everyone is entitled to enjoy their national parks. But the super-loud motorcycles *must* be in violation of basic noise ordinances that many towns and cities have established.... and Yosemite is a "natural area" where natural processes and conditions are supposed to prevail. The NPS is required to protect the "natural quiet" of this national treasure, and all the species (including humans) that thrive in quiet natural places.

BMW's, Hondas, Suzukis, and many other brands of 'bikes hum by just as fast, just as frequently, in groups just as large, but they produce far less noise... often as much or less noise pollution as the average family car.

There are quiet hours in campgrounds and housing facilities. There are standards of behavior for food storage. There are basic vehicle code rules that are simple and enforceable. Disturbing the peace is an established violation of the law in most jurisdictions.

Could the NPS begin to enforce a simple noise ordinance?

If your vehicle is obnoxiously loud (and many are intentionally customized to be just that), you can't drive into Yosemite. Require them at the entrance station to rev their engine, and take a simple decibel reading. If they are too loud, Sorry...

Thanks for listening...

Paul Amstutz - El Portal, CA

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"SUZANNE LUCAS"

[REDACTED]

09/04/2006 09:45 PM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>

cc:

Subject: Tuolumne Planning

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TWSP-185-EL5

SEP 06 2006

p. 185

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached to this email is a Microsoft Word document entitled "Tuolumne Planning.doc" that contains my comments on the Tuolumne River Plan.

Thank you,

Suzanne Lucas

[REDACTED]



Lake Forest, CA 92630 Tuolumne Planning.doc

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Public Comments for Tuolumne River Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Plan

Name: Suzanne Lucas

Date: September 4, 2006

Address: [REDACTED]
Lake Forest, Ca. 92630

I recently attended a Public Scoping Meeting and a special walk through Tuolumne Meadows where I received the Participant Guide for these plans. I have read all of the information that I received and had the wonderful experience of hearing the opinions of other people regarding these plans. I expressed several of my opinions at both public scoping events, but still wanted to send in my comments in writing.

Thank you for taking the time to include these comments in your information gathering.

I have been coming to Yosemite for 35 years and 20 of those years have been spent exploring Tuolumne Meadows. I have camped, backpacked, and day hiked in most of the segments covered by the Tuolumne Meadows Plan.

I return every year to experience the solitude, peace, tranquility, wonder, nature, wildlife, river and amazing scenery that Tuolumne offers. It is a place that offers me a place to "breathe", challenge myself, find respite and learn about nature, history and myself.

Services:

I love and value all of the above things immensely and would hate to see them change. I would hate to see any more buildings built in the Tuolumne Meadows - Segment 3 especially. I like the services being spread out and hope that services do not get consolidated into a "village". I do not want to see the Tuolumne Meadows area get built up like the Valley.

I do not think that any of the services offered in the Tuolumne Meadows area should be removed or built into more permanent structures. I like the rustic feel that the current services offer. I do think that repairs should be made if necessary.

If services are removed or reduced then the budget for these services would also be cut. In my experience it is harder to put funds back into a budget than to keep them in their already established position in the budget. Thus, if it is decided in the future that any services that had been removed should be reinstated, it may prove difficult to find the funds for them again.

I do think that the choices of day visiting, staying at the lodge, camping, hiking or backpacking should continue as they are. These options offer different people of different capabilities and interest to enjoy the area.

User Capacity:

I do not think we should restrict access to Tuolumne if at all possible because everyone, as a taxpayer, has the right to come to this area of the park. It also offers the possibility of visitors becoming ambassadors for Tuolumne, Yosemite and even other National Parks.

People need to experience and touch these areas in order to feel invested in protecting them! I do recognize that with this access comes degradation of the meadows, trails and other areas. Unfortunately, I think some compromises need to be made in order to protect the greater good of the majority of the segments in the Plan.

I think small parking lots are necessary at the Cathedral Lakes Trailhead, Dog Lake Trailhead and in the area of the road between Lembert Dome and the stables. It would be best if they could be set back behind trees if possible.

Trail Damage:

Since it seems that Day Users impact the immediate area of the Meadows, maybe a couple of the major trails between the Tioga Road and Parsons Lodge could be either board walked or rock lined in order to encourage people from social trailing and to reduce impact and deterioration.

Maybe another possibility would be to plan on moving the main trails every 5- 10 years and then do trail restoration on the old ones.

Horses:

I personally do not mind horses on the trails, but I am aware of the impact that they have in the area. Perhaps the High Sierra Camps could use Alpacas or Llamas to pack supplies in and out. Maybe they would cause less impact and damage to the trails. Maybe it could be researched by your team to see what kind of impact they would make versus horses. It might be a way to make a compromise for stock on the trails.

Are private horse owners required to bring weed free feed for their horses? If not, maybe that could be implemented through a permit process.

Tuolumne Meadows Campground:

For the most part, I like the campground the way it is! It is rustic and mountain camping....just the way it should be!!! I don't think the number of campsites should be reduced by any means....even if there are times that there are spaces available. Those trends could change in the future depending on simple things like school districts changing from standard to year round school schedules.

One person at the meeting brought up the idea of having another entrance put in at the D/E loop end of the campground where it could be turned into an area that is paved and made for a section for RV's. I think this might be something worth thinking about. Paving only that section might make it easier for them to drive/park and also keep the generator noise down for tent campers.

I think the prospect of paving the whole campground would change the camping experience for me in a negative way. I think drivers would go faster through the campground which could endanger children, wildlife and hikers. I also think it would make an even bigger impact on this area that we are trying to reduce impact. To me, asphalt is a bigger impact than potholes.

I think that the more asphalt that people see or experience makes them feel less that this is a natural area to protect and respect.

ORV's:

I believe that air quality should be looked at again as a potential Outstandingly Remarkable Value for at least Segment 3 and Segment 4 (I am not as familiar with Segment 5 or 6). I believe that the air quality is directly related to the river where there are cascades and waterfalls. Just as waves at the beach create positive ions in the air, I believe that the cascades and waterfalls do the same thing along the river corridor. I have read that these positive ions are believed to make people feel better and more relaxed or rejuvenated. I think this is one of the "unseen" experiences that draw people to the Tuolumne River. Anyone who has stood next to the cascades or waterfalls would probably agree that the air feels different next to them than 1/4 mile away.

Miscellaneous:

- I think the staff at the entry kiosk, especially the Eastern entrance, should tell each visitor that speed is strictly enforced in order to protect wildlife.
- I think it would be helpful to have future public meetings or comment periods announced in the "Yosemite Today" Newsletter.
- I like the quota system for back country permits. I think this system works very well.
- **I think that the more cement, asphalt or buildings that people see around themselves leads them to feel that they are more in "civilization" than in nature. I fear this could lead to people becoming more detached with the natural elements of Tuolumne Meadows which would be counterproductive to preserving and protecting the river and area.**

My dream is to be able to continue to share this area with my children and grandchildren. Through hiking, backpacking and playing in the river, I hope to be able to teach them about conservation, minimum impact and respect of nature so that they can grow up feeling passionate and invested in saving this incredible, awe inspiring and special place!!!!



"Kenneth Purucker"

09/04/2006 05:14 PM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov, [REDACTED]
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne River Plan...

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TWSR-180-EIS

SEP 06 2006

P. 101
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear planners,

Our comments are directed primarily to the Tuolumne Meadows area. We feel that more clear road signs would be appropriate, especially for the benefit of newcomers to the meadows. Particularly in the areas leading into the Soda Springs and Lembert Dome section. More discreet parking areas would be helpful. It would be good if there was less parking impact up and down the highway. The campground could definitely use some upgrading roadwise. Possibly some meadow board walks, to minimize random trouncing on the meadows.

Sincerely, Ken & Anne Purucker (Yosemite campers for 66 years).

J	I	E	E	T				
RT	#S	LT	DT	UT	IA	IR	OR	TS



Debby Anderson

To: yose_planning@nps.gov

cc:

Subject: Planning Tuolumne - comments

09/04/2006 02:40 PM
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SEP 06 2006

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P: 1082
Yosemite National Park
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Hello,

Thank you for your attention to my comments, as follow. First and foremost, Tuolumne is and should remain a natural wilderness area. It has suffered from all of us loving it too much but it does not then follow that we should develop it or add further recreation options to the area. The obvious and vital plan has to be to protect the area, not further damage it.

1) The river can be a swimming and fishing area, not a site for any type of motorized activity. Provide very specific information to park visitors about avoiding introducing litter or any other contaminants into the river. The river is a thing of beauty to observe and appreciate.

2) As a wilderness area Tuolumne should be strictly tent and van camping in the campgrounds, RVs and generators completely prohibited. There are many places to take RVs and boats and other immensely high impact equipment; Tuolumne should not be one of them.

3) Horses, mules and typical stock animals must be phased out. Llamas used as stock animals seem to have less of an impact on the environment - that would need to be studied. But horses, mules, typical stock animals are an unbearable menace and entirely unacceptable. They damage trails, meadows and river crossings in addition to detrimentally affecting the water quality everywhere they go. Additionally, providing trail rides to lazy people with too much disposable income seems to be a shortsighted waste of time, money and the environment.

4) The interpretive rangers presently live each season in canvas sided tent cabins. Apparently there is some interest in either moving the rangers outside the park or building something akin to the "projects" inside the park. Both ideas are disturbingly shortsighted. This is a wilderness area. Building apartments in this area is incredibly lame not to mention environmentally reprehensible. And maintaining the rangers outside of the park cuts them off from their area of service and stewardship, damages the connection they must have with the park in order to really do their jobs well, takes away one of the advantages of the job and would be completely inappropriate in terms of transportation. Would they be driving up and down Tioga Pass at all hours of the day and night as they lead hikes, night prowls, campfires, star gazing walks, etc.? Would you be shuttling them constantly? How ridiculous.

As can be deduced from my comments I am in favor of less impact on this wilderness area, surely not more. I do not think the area should suffer any additional

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TWSR-187-215
p. 282

buildings, roads or parking lots, or any expansion of recreation activities. If the visitor understands they are going to a wilderness area and can adapt their usage to the wilderness area then fine. The wilderness area should not adapt to the user who wants to bring their house with them only leaving it long enough to ruin other people's hiking experiences by getting on a smelly, dusty and frequently defecating horse or mule. The presently offered shuttle service should be encouraged or mandatory for travel to trail heads for backpacks or day hikes. Provide well organized education on the low impact use and preservation of the whole area.

Thank you,

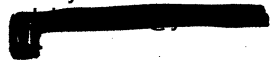
Debby Anderson

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Debby Anderson



09/04/2006 01:33 PM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Planning Tuolumne - comments

RECEIVED
TWSR-188-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 182
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

To Whom it May Concern:

As a frequent visitor to Tuolumne - I have returned for many summers and plan to for years to come - I would like to take this opportunity to give my input.

I have worked for the Santa Barbara County Parks Dept for 30 years and visited countless local, state, federal and foreign parks in my life time. I believe my views are fairly well rounded as both a park user and a park steward.

Tuolumne is unique in many ways. In order to enhance the natural world of Tuolumne and the wilderness experience I recommend the following: 1) Phase out the pack animals and horses. They cause extreme and negative impacts on vegetation, trail conditions, comfort of those on foot, and water quality. 2) Maintain the resident rangers in the existing canvas cabins. In the park system in which I work we have had a resident ranger program in place for many years. This program is currently being phased out in favor of a non-resident ranger approach - primarily as a cost cutting measure, although it is not clear how this will cut costs. I believe this has adversely affected these parks for the following reasons: when a ranger lives on site they become intimately attuned to the environment, have a deeper awareness of the area and a stronger sense of stewardship and service than do rangers who live offsite. Rangers in Tuolumne living as they do in tent-cabins are experiencing this attunement, awareness, stewardship and service and the footprint of their dwellings have a minimum impact on the environment. The prospect of rangers living elsewhere and losing that connection, or of the development of hardsided and permanent dwellings in Tuolumne is entirely unacceptable. Tuolumne is a wilderness setting not a housing project and strip mall. 3) Expand the use of waterless urinals. 4) Continue to replace older bearboxes with larger ones. 5) Prohibit generators and limit all Recreation Vehicles. 6) Finally, there are many locations which cater to high impact camping such as RVs, boating, horseback riding, biking etc. I would prefer to see Tuolumne maintain a less dramatic human and domesticated animal impact, remain a wilderness area where people can hike, camp and enjoy a wilderness experience with less emphasis on stores, RVs, cars, food service and city park-type recreation, and more emphasis on the use of the shuttle system to move people plus continued education in the value of low impact camping.

Thank you,

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TWSR-188-215
p. 282

Tim Anderson

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John Broesamle



09/04/2006 09:24 AM
MST

To: <Yose_Planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning

RECEIVED
TWSR-189-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 103
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK



Tuolumne plan.doc

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The comments that follow are based on more than six decades' experience camping in Tuolumne Meadows, first with our parents in the 1940s for weeks on end, and subsequently during shorter stays up to the present. While in Tuolumne, we hike, backpack, and fly-fish. Our comments pertain to both the Tuolumne River and Tuolumne Meadows plans, but primarily to the latter. We will not address the broader questions involved with the planning process at length, because we think the questions often answer themselves. For example, "What do you find outstanding about the natural environment in the Tuolumne area?" The Tuolumne area is of course unique in the world in the scope and variety of its topography, geology, and natural beauty. Enough said.

Our recommendations flow from a joint consideration of preservation and use. Our underlying bias, however, is toward preservation. These recommendations are:

- Develop parking areas off the highway so that the long lines of cars parked by backpackers, visitors to the high sierra camps, etc., no longer degrade the marvelous vistas that Tuolumne affords.

- Eliminate parking below Lembert Dome.

- Keep Tuolumne Meadows Lodge as it is—seasonal tent cabins plus the main tent lodge. This is historic, and provides the drive-in visitor with the feeling of being at more isolated places such as Vogelsang or Glen Aulin.

- Keep the store as it is, a seasonal tent structure. Likewise the attached eatery, Spartan though it is. We think that Delaware North is doing a commendable job of running both the store and the lodge, and is far preferable to the old Yosemite Park and Curry Co., for which we once worked seasonally.

- Avoid any addition of high-end eateries, coffee bars, and the like. Visitors to the park will find these in Yosemite Valley, in a variety ranging from the Ahwahnee to Degnan's. The high country should offer a more rugged feeling, deliberately isolated from everyday urban consumer whims.

- In the Tuolumne campground, allow visitors to reserve in advance specifically-numbered spaces of their choice. Find a smoother way for campers to enter and exit the campground, so that they are not constantly wasting time and gas standing in line at the check-in booth.

There should be no booth at all. A USFS-style fee envelope system would be a major improvement.

-- Also in the campground, restore and retain the 1930s-era stone and timber restrooms. Replace the disgusting 1950s-era blockhouse restrooms with new ones patterned on the model of the historical bathrooms from the thirties.

-- Horses, we feel, should have a place in the park, but horse operations and camping for horse owners should not be expanded.

-- Outside the scope of present planning, we feel that the Sunrise High Sierra Camp should be removed. It was established forty years ago as a gift to the then-concessionaire. Closing it would return to isolation an entire area that should never have been opened up in the first place.

-- The Tioga Pass Entrance frequently takes a long time to pass through because of the line of cars trying to enter the park. We suggest finding ways to speed up the entrance. Station a ranger or volunteer outside, moving from one car to another, to answer questions and hand out brochures, etc. before each car arrives at the pay kiosk. That way, the only thing that would need to happen at the kiosk is the purchase of a park pass or showing of a pass.

To sum up, we would like to see the entire Tuolumne Meadows area remain as much as possible the way it is. New structures should not be built, especially if they are far-flung (such as the stable and the badly-located, isolated visitor center). There is no cause for service augmentation, nor for service deletion. The balance of services available complements one's enjoyment of the stunning natural beauty of the area without particularly degrading it. The major source of degradation as things stand is line after line of parked cars that clutter both roads and viewsheds.

Katharine Broesamle

John Broesamle

[REDACTED], Ojai, CA 93023



tom habecker



09/04/2006 09:15 AM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: tuolumne comments

RECEIVED
TWSR-190-215
SEP 06 2006
p.184
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

thank you for the opportunity to comment on the future of tuolumne meadows. attached are my comments.

tom habecker



bozeman,mt 59715



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Comments on Tuolumne Meadows.doc

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Comments on Tuolumne Meadows Draft EIS

Background

I am a career park service employee, having retired in 2005 with 37 years of service. From 1981 to 1985 I was assigned as the Tuolumne Meadows Sub-district Ranger. Prior to that I was the Assistant SDR. My family and I moved to Tuolumne from our permanent residence at Crane Flat each year. We raised two small children from infants in Tuolumne, living in the hard-sided tents, then into the "old" ranger cabin and finally into the "new" cabin which now serves as the winter residence.

Tuolumne is a very special place in our lives. It holds many good memories as well as hardships. In those days, Tuolumne was a place for families to live and work together. We relied on each other to accomplish the job with little funding and few resources. Our families grew very close as each year we watched our children grow. It was a great place to raise kids and share friendships. Times have changed and those days are gone forever.

General Comments

I strongly feel that Tuolumne should retain a character as a special place. It is NOT Yosemite Valley and should be managed differently. I think visitors are looking for a unique experience, something that is different than the Valley crowds, congestion and development. Tuolumne should cultivate a more primitive hiking, camping and recreational experience. It is a place where one should be able to find a quiet spot and relax and reflect on one's surroundings.

The meadows should be retained as true meadows—that is, don't let it become just another boring lodgepole forest. I know the policy is to let nature take its course but I believe the hand of man has influenced the area to the degree that intervention of forest succession should be done.

Protect the river—stream banks are fragile and need to be protected from millions of feet. Popular river trails should be improved and designated rather than let countless "use trails" develop haphazardly. Encouraging visitors to hike along the river above and below the rivers might disperse use. However, this needs to be done carefully to protect the watershed and riparian environment.

Parking, or lack of, is a huge problem. We went to great lengths to prohibit or discourage roadside parking. When I returned to Tuolumne for a visit in the mid 1990's I was shocked at the number of vehicles parked along the road corridor. It really detracts from the experience. I was also alarmed at how poorly the meadows and river banks looked—there was trash, vegetation was trampled and the place looked "tired". I don't have a great solution to the parking situation but more discrete parking areas need to be provided and mass transit encouraged. Keep vehicles from parking along the roadsides!

Facilities

The government housing complex—"tent city" is a disgrace. The time has come to provide employees with decent living and working facilities. My suggestion is to construct individual cabins and a dorm complex. Central bath and shower facilities are ok. There should at least be hot/cold running water in the cabins. Denali and many other parks have done this and it works well. You can't expect people to live in ragged tents like migrant workers in today's world.

Office space—the present ranger station is inadequate for all the functions it must perform. I would suggest building a modern integrated office that incorporates space for the rescue cache and fire apparatus, ambulance and some winter equipment storage. There needs to be provision for sanitary cleaning of medical equipment. There also needs to be some space allotted for repairing equipment, etc. The present rescue cache was built under my watch using materials "appropriated" from the valley and whatever we could scrounge. We did the work ourselves because we were desperate for the space, having used an old generator shed for years. Perhaps the building could also provide office space for interpretation and maintenance, eliminating a hodge-podge of smaller buildings that have sprouted elsewhere.

The barn and corral are falling apart. There needs to be a stables operation in Tuolumne as it is a key location for backcountry operations as well as front country horse patrols.

Heavy snow loads need to be a consideration for whatever new facilities are constructed. I have shoveled tons of snow off of roofs up there—there has to be a better way to design buildings to shed snow or support the load. Consideration must be made for winter ranger operations—ease of movement between buildings, water supply, heat, etc.

Consider moving the entire employee complex to another location—I'm not sure where but the present location leaves much to be desired. It is tucked under the Tioga Road with all the traffic noise and there isn't much privacy from public intrusions.

Consider using the present ranger station as a "ranger" or history museum or public contact station. I do not advocate removing the station as it is probably an historic structure and is an example of what many believe a ranger station should look like.

Consider constructing a formal helipad with associated safety features—landing in the meadow in front of the station is unsafe. There have been several close calls as visitors blindly wander down the trail as a helicopter sits nearby with the blades rotating.

The campground should not be modernized to accommodate large RV's. Tuolumne should be primarily a tent or small camper oriented facility. Upgrade (repave) the roads, upgrade water, sewer and dishwashing facilities. Harden (gravel pads) campsites.

Trailheads should be easier to find. Trail signs are inadequate. Provide nice (rustic design) bulletin boards with maps. Bulletin boards are very useful for posting safety information and during search for lost persons operations.

Not sure if the gas station (is it still there?) should remain. It never did much business and gasoline, etc. is readily available outside the park.

It is difficult to find the present "visitor center". This is an adapted building and is probably inadequate for its present use. Consider building a modern visitor center and perhaps incorporate backcountry permitting operations in the same location. This would centralize two operations and allow hikers to receive current bear safety information, etc. Denali is an example of where this has been done and it works quite well.

My best advice is to **seek out and listen** to the people who live and work in Tuolumne. They will have far greater insight as to what works and what doesn't; what is most needed; what can be eliminated, etc. than any visitor or employees who work elsewhere in the park.

I sincerely hope that any planning effort is backed by sufficient funding to carry it out. Dollars are hard to come by these days and many grandiose plans have to be scaled down to something more practical. I also hope that planners and designers use a practical approach rather than "pie-in-the-sky" ideas. Consider the folks who will have to live and work in the area. Bigger is not always better. Tuolumne deserves a "go lightly" approach with careful contemplation as to what future generations will experience in this special place.



"linda barbosa"

09/04/2006 09:02 AM
MST

To: <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: tuolumne planning

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TWSR-191-EIS

SEP 06 2006

P. 1081

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Superintendent,

I am a California resident and have spent a great deal of time in Yosemite National Park over the years. I would like to offer a few suggestions as you plan for the Tuolumne area. It is a fragile area that I have seen gradually being loved to death.

I believe for the good of future generations and the future health of the Tuolumne ecosystem vehicle access needs to be limited.

I propose a plan that would only allow campers with reservations and handicap placarded vehicles beyond Crane Flat or the Eastern entrance station. An hourly shuttle system running on clean fuel would be the best way to provide access for day visitors and backpackers.

Please continue to keep me informed in the planning process.
Thank you.

Sincerely,
Linda Barbosa

Morgan Hill, CA 95037

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RT	#S	LT	DT	UT	IA	IR	OR	TS



"Anna Cummings"

09/04/2006 11:04 AM
AST

To: <Yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning

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TWSR-192-815
SEP 06 2006
p. 103
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Anna Cummings

Blacksburg, Virginia 24060

PUBLIC COMMENT

TUOLUMNE RIVER PLAN

TUOLUMNE MEADOWS PLAN

Tuolumne Meadows is a very special place to me. I am a native Virginian but have worked as a Yosemite park ranger for the past two summers as a part of the Tuolumne interpretation staff. The summer before that, I was an intern in Yosemite Valley. I have absolutely fallen in love with Tuolumne Meadows during the time I have spent there and it has become one of my favorite places in the world. The first time I came up to Tuolumne Meadows was during the early summer for a training session. I was simply in awe. I have never seen anything like it...it seemed otherworldly. It was amazing for me to be immersed in a place this serene. I immediately felt at ease and embraced by Tuolumne Meadows. I feel so fortunate that I have been able to experience this place and I have grown very attached to it. I feel that Tuolumne is a wonderfully unique place and that it should be protected. Tuolumne means a lot to me and I hope that I will be able to share the Tuolumne Meadows of my memories with others for many years to come.

To me, Tuolumne Meadows is a place where I can have access to wilderness. Tuolumne is a place where I can find quiet, solitude, peace, relaxation, adventure and challenge. I love that that you can escape civilization within a few hundred feet of the road. The ecosystem-plants, animals, rivers- is unlike anywhere in the world. I love that it is not totally developed and that it is simple and rustic. I love that it is not like anywhere else in the world-that it is not another Yosemite Valley.

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Tuolumne Meadows is a huge staging point for backcountry trips. Therefore, many of the people that visit, and work in, Tuolumne Meadows are looking for a wilderness experience -to get out into wilderness and be at one with nature. This means that developing Tuolumne Meadows - creating large complexes, pavement, cars, restaurants, hotels, and gift shops -is unnecessary. In fact, by doing so, I am sure that many people would not be drawn to Tuolumne Meadows and would choose to go somewhere else, where wilderness and simplicity is more of a focus. When we lose visitors like this, we lose the passion and livelihood of Tuolumne Meadows -and we take something away from the American legacy of National Parks. The people who truly care about the area may feel shunned and will thus turn elsewhere and we lose protectors of our park. We need to keep Tuolumne how it is -simple and appropriate to the setting. The grandeur of Yosemite Valley, to me, contrasts greatly to that of some of the surrounding buildings and structures. Most aspects of Tuolumne Meadows fit with the atmosphere of surrounding wilderness. If we take this away and develop Tuolumne Meadows more, we exclude a different type of visitor and cater to only visitors that want conveniences -a convenient, sanitary type of setting where visitors get out of their cars only to take a few pictures. What makes Yosemite National Park so amazing that along with its diverse environments is that it has something to offer to everyone. Yosemite is appealing to people who want to stay in a high class hotel and to people who want to take 10 day long backpacking trips and not see another person. It is important for us to be able to offer something for everyone, and if we develop more in Tuolumne Meadows, we are not doing that.

We need to keep in mind why Yosemite was set aside -to protect resources and allow for enjoyment. People who like all the modern conveniences have Yosemite Valley, and we need to keep people who enjoy simplicity and quiet wilderness in mind and make sure they have a place to experience Yosemite in their own way. We need to protect our resources -the animals, the plants, the scenery, the rivers and watersheds. By developing more, we alter the fragile landscape in many ways. I believe that one of that Tuolumne Meadows' saving graces is that the road is closed for most of the year. This makes Tuolumne Meadows a place of true wilderness and offers proof that man is but a visitor to Tuolumne Meadows. I love that we are able to use this historic road to get a glimpse of Tuolumne Meadows as it bursts into life during its short warm season. I love that you can stand on a dome or mountain peak and not see huge complexes of buildings. We need to keep it that way, and remember that by establishing a more convenient, modern setting for humans, we take something away from Tuolumne Meadows, we become more of a fixture, and the reasons that Yosemite and Tuolumne Meadows are protected fall away to our needs and desires. Wilderness is king in the park and we need to protect this and have areas that are fitting to the environment, which I think Tuolumne Meadows is now.

I hope that Tuolumne Meadows will remain the same throughout time. I often worry that I won't get to do all the hikes that I want to during my season and I often get sad when I leave, but I take

great comfort in knowing that the mountains and wilderness will be there forever and that I have the rest of my life to experience them. I keep my memories of walking by the Tuolumne River or sitting quietly in a meadows and seeing marmots waddle around or hearing the Belding ground squirrels whistle with me when I am not there. I don't want to look back on my time there as the "good old days" before Tuolumne Meadows was developed, when Tuolumne was quiet and peaceful and had a beautifully slow pace of life and the buildings were simple and unobtrusive. Please keep it this way.

Sincerely,
Anna Cummings



09/05/2006 02:36 PM
EDT

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows Plan

RECEIVED

TWSR-193-E15

SEP 06 2006

P. 181

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Dear Sir,

A bit of history. My wife and I first camped in Tuolumne Meadows about 1960. We introduced our six year old son to TM in 1976. He and I still meet there nearly every summer. We have hiked all the trails out of TM. Many times over. I think that TM is in our blood.

I started camping there before trail head quotas and designated camping areas. Even though these regulations restrict our activities, I applaud them.

Some of my concerns.

- Most of Tuolumne Meadows campground is in shameful condition. The ground is covered with wood ash.

Where

are the pine needles? This is not woodsy camping. Campsites are too close together. Even if that means reducing the

number of campsites

- While backpacking from Agnews Meadow to TM, we spent a night at the upper end of Lyell Canyon. A pack train was

camped nearby. The stock animals had free rein. Including access to the creek banks. We keep out latrine areas well

away from the creek. The animals don't respect that regulation. Stop free ranging.

- Stock operators aren't subject to trailhead quotas. They should be heavily regulated, especially given the amount of trail damage they produce. I would like to see a gradual phasing out of stock animal use except to supply the High Sierra camps.
- Spend more money repairing trails.
- I think that the meadows themselves need to be restored.
- I don't want to see more commercial activities in the Meadows. No more Yosemite Valleys.

I think that I can summarize my wish for Tuolumne Meadows: That it will be as beautiful for my grandchildren as it

was for my wife and I 46 years ago.

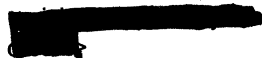
Frank Junga

Cobalt, CT 06414

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Michelle Meloche



09/03/2006 09:13 PM
MST


To: YOSE_Planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Scoping

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TWSR-194-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 101
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

My family has been enjoying Tuolumne since the late 1970's and we place a high value on this part of the park. Here are my values for Tuolumne:

1. Keep it small- do not add camp sites, cabins, or the like. Do not add any more public buildings.
2. Maintain the trails for hiking, but do not widen them.
3. Do not stock fish - prevent any more contamination of the high country wildlife.
4. Do not allow tour busses in the store parking lot.
5. Quieter waste trucks- electric? Larger recycle trash containers to avoid piles of trash outside the can.

Sincerely,
Michelle

Michelle Meloche M.S. CCC-SLP


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RT	#S	LT	DT	UT	IA	IR	OR	TS



"Jonathan Braun"

09/04/2006 03:59 AM
GMT

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows EIS Comments

RECEIVED
TWSR-195-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 1072
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Please except the following comments for the Tuolumne Meadows planning and EIS process.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Braun

Superintendent

9/3/06

Attn: Tuolumne Planning
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA
95389

Dear Sir,

I would like to offer a few thoughts and concerns relating to the forthcoming Tuolumne Meadows Plan EIS.

I have been a regular visitor to Tuolumne Meadows for about 45 years and find myself ever more dismayed by the dramatically increasing human impact at this wondrously unique Sierra gem.

I strongly urge the Park Service to adopt policies through your planning process that scale back all commercial uses at Tuolumne Meadows. Specifically I recommend removal of the store and grill. These businesses are not essential and create a focal point for traffic as well as detracting from the natural beauty of the area.

Most importantly the commercial pack stock operation at Tuolumne should be removed and the numbers of stock allowed on the trails greatly reduced. I feel these facilities are fundamentally incompatible with the Park Services responsibility to preserve the extraordinary natural values of unique sites such as Tuolumne Meadows. Further more the stock generate very intense environmental impacts as a result of the tremendous erosion they cause to trails, meadows and stream banks. The animal waste is a source of pollution and is esthetically unpleasant for pedestrians.

The parking arrangement for the Cathedral Lakes trail head needs to be rethought. The present arraignment of parking along highway 120 is unsafe and aesthetically undesirable. Why not reopen the old off road parking area?

An issue of great concern to me that affects Tuolumne Meadows but is also a much larger problem is the intensity of air traffic over Yosemite Park. At this time, it is nearly impossible to experience the natural quiet of the high country due to the nearly constant roar of jets passing overhead. I realize this is a big issue but it would be appropriate for the draft EIS to address it.

Thank you for the opportunity to make these comments.

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TWSR-195-EIS
p. 282

Sincerely,

Jonathan Braun

[REDACTED]
San Anselmo, CA
94979



Tuolumne Meadows Plan Comments



Greg McPheeters

[REDACTED]

09/02/2006 06:49 PM
MST

To: YOSE_Planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Planning Comments

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TWSR-196-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 101
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Feedback for Tuolumne Meadows Scoping -

My favorite activities in Tuolumne Meadows are hiking and climbing. I have always enjoyed camping at the main Tuolumne Meadows Campground in addition to backpacking into the backcountry.

In addition to preserving the area for these types of low impact activities, I would like to see measures taken to reduce automobile traffic to the area, probably with bus service to the area and perhaps bicycle rentals/facilities once in the park.

Greg McPheeters

[REDACTED]

Santa Clara, CA 95051

[REDACTED]

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Beckie Simmie



09/01/2006 06:08 PM
MST

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows comments

RECEIVED
TWSR-197-EIS
SEP 06 2006
P. 1081
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

This is a response to the notice I received on feedback for "Plan for the Future"
Tuolumne River Plan and Tuolumne Meadows Plan.

Just 3 days previous to receiving this notice my husband and completed a 6-day
backpack trip down the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne River. I wanted to share with
the National Park Service a few important observations:

- 1) 9 trees are down on the trail that travels from Tuolumne Meadows along the Tuolumne River to Pate Valley. These trees are blocking the trail between California Falls and the intersection of Pate Valley/White Wolf/Glen Aulin. Two of these trees are over 36 inches in diameter; the others are smaller but still blocking the trail. Bushes are also over growing on the trail causing difficulty for the hiker or horse rider.
- 2) Sections of reinforced cobble stone trail are coming undone due to runoff and wear. These beautiful trails that have been build many years ago have held up considerably well but in a few areas the rocks have washed away and are causing the trail to unravel and loose it's function. In some cases only a few rocks need to be replaced into the corncob style of stone work, other wise the trail is slowly breaking down and we are loosing these beautiful stone trails.
- 3) When obtaining our permit we were informed that the new process for eliminating in the wilderness is to pack out your soiled toilet paper. Our observation was that most people are eliminating 20-30 feet from their campsite and digging a hole about 2 inches deep and leaving poop and toilet paper were they did their business. This is often the location where the next backpacker is looking to set up their campsite. Perhaps a new approach is needed in training the backpacker or hiker were and how to eliminate, because what your saying isn't working.

Hope this is helpful. We really enjoy this area and hope to return many times.

Thank you,

Beckie Simmie and Alan Campbell



Santa Rosa, Ca 95403

Do you Yahoo!?

Everyone is raving about the all-new Yahoo! Mail.

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09/01/2006 03:03 PM
EDT

To: yose_planning@nps.gov
cc:
Subject: Yosemite.doc

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P. 1082
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK



Yosemite.doc

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TWSR-198-EIS
p. 2 of 2

September 1, 2006

Superintendent
ATTN: Tuolumne Planning
P O Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Dear Sir,

With regard to the Tuolumne River and Meadows areas Planning effort, you will no doubt receive a flood of input from wilderness freaks who would probably return this area to a completely undeveloped state. Having succeeded in reducing the opportunities for the Valley, they will no doubt no turn their attention to the High Country.

As a minority of one, I would fervently suggest that there should be more development at Tuolumne Meadows. As a family which stays in the Valley at provided lodging, we invariably also travel to the high country---and must return to the Valley floor on the same day as a result of the lack of sufficient lodging. I recognize that the restricted seasonal access makes the economics of lodging there more challenging, but snow restrictions still permit operation of high quality, short season lodging at such parks as Yellowstone. While an Awahnee replica is hardly reasonable, something along the reduced lines of the earlier Marriott (now under Park control) at the South end of the park might be possible. Any effort to shift activity off the Valley floor to other areas of the Park is desirable, and providing reasonable lodging at Tuolumne would moderate traffic on the Tioga Road because a daily return to the Valley floor would no longer be required.

I recognize that this viewpoint is likely to be in conflict with the general environmental community. I maintain however that the Park needs to be accessible for more than backpackers, and that tasteful lodging at Tuolumne Meadows would contribute to that goal.

Sincerely,

John C. Koepke



"Kevin"

09/01/2006 11:31 AM
MST

To: "Yosemite Planning" <yose_planning@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Tuolumne Meadows Plan

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P. 186

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Planning for Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River and Tuolumne Meadows

My comments will be in 3 categories:

- The Campground
- The Lodge
- Stock (I think any plan for the Tuolumne area must include an element covering stock usage.)

The Campground:

-

To meet the provisions of Wild and Scenic River legislation, it seems that some campsites in the A-loop will have to be eliminated. In fact the whole A-loop may have to be dramatically redesigned. I am in favor of implementing the provisions of this legislation, while retaining the same number of campsites in the campground.

To begin let's look at the campground with a summary of its History. What follows is written from memory – and obviously inaccurate and incomplete, but the factual data is

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at your disposal. Over the years, many steps – some big, some small – have been taken to be more environmentally sound and reduce campers impact on the environment.

Up until the building of the campground, campers were allowed to camp anywhere they chose throughout the Meadows. I can only imagine the impact of vehicles driving wherever they wanted across the Meadow and camping with no sanitary facilities!

Some items:

- Construction of the campground (approximately 1938). Camping is limited to established campsites.
- Construction of 4 rest rooms in the campground. Imagine sanitation when camping was allowed throughout the Meadows. Now imagine how much improved the situation was with the construction of rest rooms with running water and flush toilets.
- About 1952 the Sierra Club sells their in-holding campground to the Park Service. From now on members will use the established campground.
- About 1955 3 additional rest rooms are built.
- In the 1970s some A-loop campsites located above the new-style restroom are closed. (I think others have been eliminated as well. I think over time the number of sites has been reduced quite a bit.)
- In about 1980 some campsites along the river are eliminated.
- Somewhere along the way wood began to be sold at the store reducing personal collecting.
- In the late 1980s "Bear Boxes" are introduced and installed in each campsite. (Later a second generation – an improved model (larger, installed off the ground, improved locking mechanism)- replace all the 1st generation models.)
- Bear Boxes and other bear protection initiatives have made a DRAMATIC change in bear-human interactions. This year in camp the week of August 6th, I was told that not a single incident of a bear getting human food had been reported all season!
- In the 1990's fire rings are installed and fires are permitted only in these rings.

(Thereby going a long ways to limit the size and placement of fires.)

- And about 2000 the campground was closed for a year as a new improved sanitation system was implemented.
- (I would add that over the past few years ground critters have just about disappeared from the campground as have birds! How much of this can be traced to stock attracting cow birds to Tuolumne?)

My point is that the campgrounds were not just built a long time ago and that's it. There has been on-going developments – some improvements – and what all the changes have in common is that while the campground may be thought of as a "sacrifice area" actually a series of mitigating changes have been made – all for the better.

Recommendations:

Basically my recommendations are to comply with Wild and Scenic River legislation AND maintain the same number of sites. In previous times, all – or many – interests were served. At the time of having to eliminate some facilities, I think nothing should be considered sacred just because it's always been done that way. All aspects of the campground should be viewed from the perspective of how the Meadows can be protected while serving the public as well as possible.

Specifically:

- Loop D: I am a life member of YA. As such I have enjoyed many Field Seminars and over the years participated on 5 backcountry Work Trips. YA enjoys a franchise of Loop D that I believe needs to be re-examined. I would eliminate YA's franchise and dedicate 2 group sites (A & B) until a permanent arrangement can be put in place. Maybe a small campground could be developed west of Elizabeth Creek, which would be dedicated to YA – with their own entrance, restroom, etc.
- Conness Circle: the site of children's programs. In other times with more

Interpretive Rangers, this facility was used more. For years now, usage seems to be a single children's program lasting one hour one day a week. My suggestion is to move the children's program to Dana Circle. (It appears this could be accomplished with either no change or only a minor change to the campground schedule, i.e. on the day of the children's program, move it ½ hour earlier, and, if necessary, move the general campfire program ½ hour later.) Then build campsites in this space.

- Campsites above the "new-style" restroom in A-loop. These sites were on a large (relatively) flat shelf and should be easy to recreate.

- Eliminate the horse camp and convert that area into general use campsites. The private horse owner coming to the Park is certainly a small, special interest group, which should have been moved outside the Park years ago. Now is the time!

I am aware that relocating the campground entrance has been under discussion for a number of years. A question I ask is, "If this were a new development, how would it be done?" What we know is that it would not be done the way it is now. I'll divide this comment into 2 parts. I support and recommend relocating campground entrance with the functions now performed in the campground office and the kiosk in the campground into a single building located west of the gas station.

I am aware that redesigning the store/restaurant and gas station in such a way that they did not directly face the road is being discussed - as well as consolidating the Visitors' Center into a single complex. This is GREAT idea, space and money permitting. However, my recommendation is to NOT do this - at least at this time. While a great concept, where would it be built? Near the current location of the store and gas station, it would (1) move way into the campground as well as (2) the wet area aspects of the space behind the store would have to be studied. The consolidated area could be built further west, but the further west, the less convenient to campers.

Tuolumne Lodge:

-

I support whatever changes need to be made to comply with Wild and Scenic River legislation. It seems – at a minimum – this would require:

- Removal of current employee tent housing now too close to the river.
- Removal of the current kitchen, restaurant, reception, lobby functions.
- Removal of current Lodge guest tents that are now too close to the river.

I think the Lodge functions could be replaced with one or more buildings located behind where the bear boxes are now located on the north side of the parking lot. Employee housing could be replaced with 2-story structures like those being built as employee and concessionaire housing in the Valley. I believe a good location would be north of my proposed main Lodge building, east of the backpacker/ overflow parking lot.

With this approach:

- The Lodge complex would be brought into compliance with Wild and Scenic River legislation.
- OK – it would be a loss of rustic and historic “charm”, but the kitchen, restaurant, reception and lobby functions would be in a modern building.
- The Lodge would be able to offer a choice of accommodations; existing tent cabins back the legal distance from the river and modern rooms with heat (!) and bathrooms (!).

Stock:

I believe a full, major section of this Plan should be devoted to Stock to include:

- Overall trail usage by stock. It is well known that probably 90+% of trail effort by Park trail crews is on those trails used by stock.

- Face the reality that stock is hard on the environment. In the sensitive landscape of the High Country, the impacts are great – and only too obvious!
- It's axiomatic that a poorly maintained trail in the High country is one not used by stock.
- What might not be quite as apparent is the standards/quality of work necessary for trails used by stock versus those used primarily by hikers. As one who has volunteered on trail building projects in 4 Western states over the past 13 years, I would estimate the ratio at about 5:1. For every mile of stock trail maintained, 5 miles – or more - of foot traffic trail could be maintained.
- Use and overuse of trails and campsites along Lyell Canyon. A new, increased level of monitoring and control of usage in this sensitive area should be undertaken IMMEDIATELY – if not sooner.
- My #1 recommendation is to study alternate means of supplying the High Sierra Camps. My suggestion is to use llamas as pack animals. They carry 100 pounds versus 150 for mules, and are MUCH easier on the environment in general and trails in particular.

That's it. Good luck. I'm available for questions and/or expanding any thoughts. I look forward to experiencing the fruits of your labors. (An acknowledgment of receipt of this would be appreciated.)

Kevin Cronin

[REDACTED]

Playa del Rey, CA 90293

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

"Scott Burns"

09/05/2006 05:50 PM
MST

To: <YOSE_planning@nps.gov>
cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Tuolumne Scoping Comments

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P. 1 of 4

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Attn: Tuolumne Planning
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

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Superintendent, Yosemite National Park
Attn: Tuolumne Planning
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Thank you for the opportunity to comment during the scoping period for the Tuolumne planning effort. Please consider the following transportation policies adopted by the Mono County Local Transportation Commission for the Yosemite area in your planning process. These policies, adopted several years ago, are contained within the Mono County Regional Transportation Plan. As an active member of YARTS, Mono County continues to support a strong relationship with Yosemite, particularly the Tuolumne area.

Please give us a call if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Scott Burns
Executive Director
Mono County Local Transportation Commission

YOSEMITE POLICIES

GOAL

Yosemite National Park is a national and world-wide treasure that must be protected and preserved. Bordering the Park's eastern boundary, and serving as its only access point from Eastern California, Mono County is an important component of the Yosemite region. Through its transportation planning efforts, the Mono LTC will assist in the preservation and protection of the Park by strengthening the relationship between the Yosemite region and its eastern gateway.

OBJECTIVE A

Support the Park's mission to preserve the resources that contribute to Yosemite's unusual character and attractiveness: its exquisite scenic beauty; outstanding wilderness values; diverse Sierra Nevada ecosystems; historic resources, including its Native American heritage; and its role in a national conservation ethic. These resources are to be made available for enjoyment, education, and recreation while leaving them unimpaired.

Policy 1: Management of Yosemite's congestion and access should be accomplished in a way that does not adversely affect the quality of life and quality of experience in gateway communities.

Policy 2: Work cooperatively with the National Park Service to support environmental preservation within the Yosemite region.

Policy 3: Transit related infrastructure should maximize consideration for the environment.

OBJECTIVE B

Improve opportunities for access by alternative modes (transit, bicycles, pedestrians, air, other non-auto modes).

Policy 1: In support of YARTS regional transit and other alternative modes for access to Yosemite, encourage multi-modal infrastructure projects that compliment the gateway communities, emphasize alternatives to the auto, and integrate joint use of facilities.

Policy 2: Encourage the use of alternative travel modes for access into Yosemite, including transit and bicycles; e.g., transit riders should have priority access at Park gates and guaranteed access to the Valley.

Policy 3: High priority should be given to developing a parking facility in the Crane Flat/Highway 120 junction area.

Policy 4: Maintenance and improvement projects on Highway 120 should focus on accommodating alternative transportation modes.

Policy 5: Encourage Yosemite National Park, Caltrans, and Mono County to work cooperatively to develop bicycle facilities on Highway 120 both within and outside the Park.

Policy 6: Encourage the development of a transit connection between the east side and Tuolumne Meadows.

Policy 7: YARTS should be designed to accommodate bicyclists and bikes.

OBJECTIVE C

Encourage diversity in visitor destinations and experiences.

Policy 1: The Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) should be developed and implemented in a way that best supports local economies, including:

- a. Using YARTS to change visitor behavior to include longer stays in the Eastern Sierra.
- b. Encouraging Yosemite National Park to promote a policy of dispersing visitors to other areas in the Park and the gateway communities.
- c. Promoting YARTS marketing efforts to include information about gateway attractions.

Policy 2: Plan for and promote the concept that the Yosemite experience begins in the gateway communities. Marketing the Yosemite experience should be a countywide effort.

Policy 3: Provide facilities that support a diversity of visitors.

OBJECTIVE D

Provide for safe and consistent access between Yosemite National Park and its eastern gateway.

Policy 1: To facilitate visitor travel planning and provide some certainty for local gateway economies, the LTC should work with Yosemite National Park to guarantee opening and closing dates for Tioga Road (Highway 120 West).

Policy 2: Promote opening the areas along Highway 120 to Tuolumne Meadows as soon as conditions are safe. Provide sewage system alternatives to facilitate this policy.

Policy 3: Consider using pricing mechanisms as a means to fund Tioga Road opening activities.

Policy 4: Accurate and timely information about conditions in the Park should be available in the gateway communities.

Policy 5: Maintenance and improvement projects on Highway 120 should focus on improving safety, including providing turnouts to allow for safe stops and passing areas.

OBJECTIVE E

Develop transportation infrastructure that supports access to and within the gateway communities.

Policy 1: Highway 120 should remain a trans-Sierra highway open to through traffic.

Policy 2: Support improvements to key access routes to Mono County and the eastern gateway corridors.

Policy 3: Resource management decisions in the Park (e.g. changes in allowable land uses, access, and overnight accommodations) should consider associated impacts to gateway communities and access corridors.